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President: Mr. Han Seung-soo ..... (Republic of Korea)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Botnaru (Republic of Moldova), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 11 (*continued*)

Report of the Security Council (A/56/2)

Mr. Tomka (Slovakia): This is a good opportunity for the General Assembly to review the past year's work of the Security Council and to consider its future direction. Let me thank Ambassador Ryan, President of the Security Council, for his thoughtful introduction of the annual report. Our debate is a significant exercise, contributing to better awareness of the full responsibility of all Members of the United Nations — and in particular of the Security Council members — for issues relating to peace and security.

Many of the matters dealt with in the report are complex and serious, and the report itself provides us with very detailed facts and technical information. At the same time, Slovakia, as a non-member of the Security Council, would very much like to see a more analytical approach to reporting on the Council's work. From a quantitative point of view, it is clear that the agenda is constantly growing. Our focus here, however, is on the quality and efficiency of actions. In this respect, the report should try to meet the need expressed by many States for more analytical and succinct reporting by the Council.

The Security Council has had its successes, but also its setbacks, during the previous period under review. In our view, a more effective Security Council basically lies in its ability to take early action, including providing early warnings and information. The Council must be able to take early action — preferably when a potential conflict or crisis is already *in statu nascendi*. Conflict prevention is a difficult subject in the Council's work. Slovakia welcomed the consideration by the Council on 20 July 2000 of the role of the Security Council in the prevention of armed conflicts. There is a particular need for a trustful and constructive relationship between the United Nations and regional actors. This is a task not only for the Security Council, but also for the United Nations as a whole.

Member States, which turn to the United Nations when their security is threatened, legitimately expect to be heard and helped — and without delay. The Security Council must have the willingness and the ability to respond to such requests from Member States in all parts of the world. The success or failure of Council actions is in the hands of all of us, but in particular in the hands of the Security Council membership. Responsibility is commensurate with the power that a Member State enjoys. Effective conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peace-building must involve the United Nations system as a whole. Council members are cautious — often too cautious — and try to avoid actions that the countries in question perceive as outside interference. As we have seen, missed opportunities come at a high price.

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In this connection, let me point out two other elements related to the credibility of the Security Council: transparency and decision-making. In our view, making greater transparency part of the working method in the Security Council will contribute decisively to confidence-building. Openness is a significant goal in itself. But it is particularly a means of promoting broad consultations and involving non-members of the Council when a decision to be taken is under consideration. That may lead to the enhancement of the implementation of Council resolutions. Non-members of the Council have the right to be fully briefed about its work. Furthermore, Slovakia considers that there is a need for the Security Council to be more open to outside expertise and influence. More can be done by Council members to allow parties concerned and United Nations agencies to contribute to its deliberations on specific issues. At the same time, we welcome the gradual improvement made over the year with regard to closed-door meetings that were followed by substantial briefings or open meetings.

The role of regional organizations in the work of the Council is of growing importance. This is to be welcomed, but more could be done. In the Balkans, the actions of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union and others continue to prove essential for peace and stability. Yet the Security Council can never abdicate its primary responsibility for maintaining or restoring international peace and security.

It is essential to maintain the efficiency of the Security Council's decision-making. We welcome the report of the Secretary-General dated 20 April 2000 entitled "No exit without strategy: Security Council decision-making and the closure or transition of United Nations peacekeeping operations". This report provides valuable guidelines for all of us, both members and non-members of the Security Council.

Before I conclude my statement, let me congratulate the newly elected members of the Security Council: Bulgaria, Cameroon, Guinea, Mexico and the Syrian Arab Republic. We express the hope that they will relentlessly work for the just cause of international peace and security.

We certainly realize that the Security Council may not be able to resolve all conflicts. But we, as Members of the United Nations — and all of us as human beings — have reason to expect that the Council will at all times manifest a serious effort to stop human suffering resulting from threats to peace, no matter where they occur.

Mr. Navarrete (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Once again, we the States Members of the United Nations are present here on this annual occasion that offers us an opportunity to express in the General Assembly our views on the report on the activities of the Security Council.

My delegation wishes to express its appreciation to the President of the Council for the month of October, Ambassador Richard Ryan, Permanent Representative of Ireland, for introducing the report before us today, which consists of several sections containing information on the work of the Council during the period from 16 June 2000 to 15 June 2001.

Once again, we note with concern that, regrettably, the annual report does not address the concerns that Member States have repeatedly expressed regarding the need for the report to be devoted to a review of substantive issues and to relevant information on the decision-making process and the items considered at the various meetings of the Council, whose resolutions affect all Member States.

As it has done on numerous other occasions, the Mexican delegation would like to stress the need for the Security Council to fully discharge its obligation under Article 24, paragraph 3, and Article 15, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations by ensuring that the annual and special reports that it submits to the General Assembly are analytical and substantive and not mere compendiums of documents, resolutions and decisions that have already been published and with which we are all familiar beforehand.

As for its actual contents, we recognize that the report may be of great interest to an academic or researcher interested in learning about the list of items, the annual collection of resolutions and presidential statements, and the documents of the Security Council. We believe, however, that this document should go further and be recognized as a source of substantive information on the treatment of each of the items under consideration by the Council, which would also fulfil the obligation of that organ to keep all Member States of the Organization adequately informed.

In this connection, we support the decision of the Security Council to begin the consideration of the annual report in an informal working group charged with reviewing the documentation and procedural aspects of the Council, with a view, as I already mentioned, to ensuring that the Council fully discharges its obligation to regularly update the General Assembly.

We also note with satisfaction that, once again, the report contains monthly reviews prepared by the Presidents of the Council on the work of that organ during the month in which they presided over its work. These documents are useful and valuable and may well constitute the most substantive and readable part of the report. We welcome the continuation of the practice initiated by Costa Rica to publish them in a timely manner as official documents of the Council.

My delegation believes that the exchange of information between members of the Security Council and members of the General Assembly should be more dynamic. While not failing to recognize the efforts of the Council to increase the number of its formal meetings, we regret that the number of closed meetings continues to be higher than the number of open meetings. We once more urge the Council to fully respect the spirit and the letter of rule 48 of its provisional rules of procedure, which provides that it should hold its meetings in public. Holding closed meetings should be an exception; but, regrettably, current practice has made that the rule.

Moreover, we must recognize, as some delegations have already noted here, that the measures taken to improve the working methods of the Council have had some degree of success, largely as a result of the fact that the members of the Council have listened to the proposals made in the Working Group dealing with the reform of the Security Council. However, much remains to be done. We urge the Council to heed the appeal of the Member States of the Organization and endeavour to submit a report that clearly reflects the methodological, procedural and substantive issues that together comprise the work of the Council.

I wish to stress the importance my delegation attaches to a substantive review by the General Assembly of the report of the Security Council. This should not be merely a formal and routine exercise, as is the case now, but a genuine in-depth consideration of the items contained in the report. To that end, it would be useful to implement the procedure envisaged in resolution 51/241, which the General Assembly adopted unanimously five years ago. We sincerely hope that, in the not-too-distant future, the President of the Assembly will be in a position to assess the debate on this issue and, in the light of his conclusions, undertake informal consultations to study more closely one or several of the items contained in the report, as provided for in that resolution. This would serve to strengthen the role of the Assembly, whose members have assigned to the Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace, and help to bring about the balance that should exist between the two organs.

We note with satisfaction that the members of the Security Council have recognized the need to improve the Council's practices and to promote transparency. We hope that that conviction can be transformed into concrete action. The delegation of Mexico wishes to reiterate its commitment to a Security Council that is more transparent and dynamic, with improved methods of work and an improved relationship with the General Assembly.

My delegation would like to thank the many speakers in this debate who have congratulated those countries, including Mexico, that were recently elected to non-permanent seats on the Security Council for the next two years. My delegation would like to reiterate its commitment to work and cooperate in this respect, while expressing our gratitude for the congratulations offered and for the trust that the General Assembly has placed in Mexico through that vote.

Mr. Manele (Solomon Islands): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Richard Ryan, for his introduction of the report (A/56/2) of the Security Council yesterday. I would also like to congratulate Bulgaria, Cameroon, Guinea, Mexico and the Syrian Arab Republic on their election to the Security Council. I should also like to take this opportunity to express the warm congratulations of Solomon Islands to the United Nations and the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, on their momentous award last week of the Nobel Peace Prize — an award bestowed in recognition of the efforts of our Organization and of the Secretary-General in maintaining international peace and security and in promoting development, justice and human rights. It is a fitting award for the enduring significance of the United Nations as an instrument of global cooperation for the common good.

On the other hand, it will also serve as an encouragement, and carries with it a sense of obligation for our Organization to better serve humanity in the twenty-first century.

The beginning of the new millennium has brought new challenges, especially in the field of peace and security. The inhuman and despicable terrorist attacks on the United States on 11 September were a vivid illustration of the seriousness of these challenges and of the need for the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole to move forward with measures to safeguard international peace and security. The fight against international terrorism must include urgent efforts to implement Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) of 28 September 2001. Above all, the timely implementation of the strategies outlined under section II, "Peace, security and disarmament", of the Secretary-General's report (A/56/326), entitled "Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration", is now more urgent than ever.

The report of the Security Council before us provides a useful overview of how the Council dealt with key issues of peace and security during the period under review. However, like others, my delegation feels that the report would have been more helpful if it had included some analysis of the implementation of the Council's decision and resolutions — for example, whether its endorsed actions in troubled areas have been effective or not — and, where required, provided recommendations for further action based on the unique circumstances of each case. I believe that that would have contributed towards the full realization of the Council's primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

With regard to conflict prevention, the recent Security Council resolution, 1366 (2001) on the prevention of armed conflict, is of particular importance. Solomon Islands welcomes the resolution's broad and progressive endorsement of a range of issues related to prevention, as well as its recommendations and contributions to the dialogue. Similarly, the major report (A/55/985) of the Secretary-General on the prevention of armed conflict, submitted to the General Assembly and the Security Council in June 2001, contains concrete recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of various United Nations organs, including the Council, as well as other bodies, agencies and Secretariat departments, and to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and civil society in conflict prevention.

Furthermore, in his report on the work of the Organization (A/56/1), the Secretary-General stated, inter alia, his intention to start submitting periodic regional or subregional reports to the Security Council on disputes that may potentially threaten international peace and security. It would be useful if future reports of the Council could outline the Council's engagement in the implementation of these recommendations and its responses to such periodic reports. Consideration should also be given to the time frame within which the report of the Council should be made available, so that the wider United Nations membership could benefit from fresh information on issues that are of interest to it.

Chapter 21 of the report of the Security Council before us reflects the Council's informal consultations of the whole on 13, 14 and 16 November 2000 on the situation in the Solomon Islands following the conclusion of the Townsville Peace Agreement (TPA) on 15 October 2000. The TPA led to a ceasefire between the warring parties and provides the basis for the current peace process. As indicated in the report, the President of the Security Council issued a statement (S/PRST/2000/33) on behalf of the Council, strongly supporting the TPA. The Agreement was also circulated as a Council document. On behalf of my country, I wish to take this opportunity to thank the Security Council for its strong support for the Agreement.

Since December 2000, an international peace monitoring group composed of unarmed military personnel and civilian police, mainly from Australia and New Zealand, has been working very closely with our National Peace Monitoring Council to implement the disarmament provisions of the Agreement and to promote peace and reconciliation. Progress on the surrender of weapons has been very slow.

A review of the TPA aimed at resolving obstacles to the effective implementation of the Agreement began on 20 September 2001. It was, however, suspended indefinitely just a day before a revised Agreement was to be signed. The suspension of the review process was due to the withdrawal of one of the major signatories following an incident that is believed to be unrelated to the process. Nevertheless, the two

major parties to the Agreement remain committed to the peace process. It should also be noted that the participation of civil society in the review process demonstrates my Government's desire for wider participation and cooperation in the peace process and, above all, in conflict prevention. As soon as the review is resumed and a revised Agreement is concluded, the Security Council will be informed accordingly.

Moreover, my Government's peace plan for 2000 and its programme of action for 2000-2002, adopted last year, include policy principles and strategies aimed at addressing the root causes of the conflict and at avoiding the recurrence of such conflict. The continued participation and support of our development partners is crucial to our rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, as well as to lasting peace and sustainable development.

Finally, my delegation welcomes the Security Council's growing interest in the protection of civilians, in particular women and children, in conflict situations, and its focused attention on issues such as HIV/AIDS. We hope it will demonstrate a similar understanding and interest in issues like environmental degradation, in particular climate change and sea-level rise, which directly undermines the human security and the very existence of small island developing States, including Solomon Islands.

Mr. Šahović (Yugoslavia): Allow me to begin by expressing the appreciation of my delegation to the President of the Security Council, Ambassador Ryan, Permanent Representative of Ireland, for his introduction of the report of the Security Council. I would also like to use this opportunity to pay tribute to the outgoing Council members for their valuable contribution in the past period and to extend congratulations to the newly elected non-permanent members: Bulgaria, Cameroon, Guinea, Mexico and Syria. I wish them success in discharging their extremely important and serious responsibilities in the coming two years.

Indeed, the report of the Security Council provides clear evidence of the workload the Council has to deal with and the variety of issues it has to cover. In addition, the Nobel Peace Prize recently awarded to the United Nations and the Secretary-General provides fresh momentum for the Organization as a whole, and the Security Council in particular, to continue to address difficult problems of international peace and security with renewed energy and determination.

No doubt the period ahead is going to be demanding in many respects. The terrorist attacks on the United States last month opened a new and extremely complex chapter for the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular. The challenges are enormous and the Council will certainly need to analyse them and think through how they might be addressed.

Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) has set up an unprecedented framework for dealing with a very broad phenomenon, not a specific conflict or crisis. What seems to be fairly clear already at this early stage is that this effort against international terrorism will require some adjustment in the Council's methodology of work. It seems that more transparency and interaction between the Council and the rest of the United Nations membership will be necessary in order to fashion truly effective and persistent long-term action against terrorism. In this action, which is beginning to take shape, all countries will have to provide input. Therefore, more cooperation on different levels will be necessary, including between the Security Council, the General Assembly and other United Nations organs and bodies.

Calls on the Council to adopt a more transparent and interactive approach have constantly been made over previous years. Unfortunately, they were not always very successful. Perhaps now, in the new circumstances, conditions are better for establishing broader, more regular and effective communication between the Council and other segments of the Organization in addressing not only the acute terrorism crisis, but also other outstanding issues pertaining to the maintenance of international peace and security.

In fact, the debate about the report of the Security Council is, to a large extent, a discussion on resolving conflicts in various parts of the world through peacekeeping and similar United Nations missions. Obviously, these missions are many, of different character, scope and size, and they took shape against distinct political backgrounds. Regrettably, as much as the report is detailed and illustrative concerning the Council's agenda, the number of meetings held, the decisions taken and the correspondence involved, it does not reflect the substance of the problems that were discussed and the complexities involved. My

delegation joins previous speakers who emphasized the need for a less technical and more analytical approach by the Council when reporting to the General Assembly. In this connection, we find many suggestions made during the current debate very interesting and valuable, for example, those by the Permanent Representatives of Singapore and India.

While it is necessary to improve the reporting, it is even more important to make further progress concerning other aspects of the Security Council's work. What I have in mind, for instance, is increasing the possibilities for non-members to make meaningful inputs in Council deliberations. The Council's relations with troop- and other contributing countries should be strengthened as well. Similarly, more possibilities should be provided for countries whose interests are directly affected by Council decisions to take part in discussions before these decisions are made.

A sizeable portion of the Security Council report is dedicated to the issues directly involving my country or its immediate vicinity. Indeed, the Council devoted, and is continuing to do so, much time and energy to the Balkans. In this connection, I would like to make some comments.

During the period covered by the report, significant positive changes took place in Yugoslavia and the region as a whole. Unfortunately, the situation in some areas is still very complex and is fraught with the potential to deteriorate to open confrontations and clashes. The Security Council, therefore, has to continue to follow developments closely and to react promptly to events and trends that may destabilize the region. It is not enough to review periodically the performance of a mission that the Council has established and leave all decisions to a mission's leadership on the ground. On the contrary, the Council should provide guidance as the situation evolves and changes, rather than simply being guided by the mission's leadership. In other words, a proactive method is required to create conditions for the successful outcome of a mission.

I am glad to be able to note that the Council is increasingly inclined to apply such an active approach with regard to the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK). I believe that it should continue to do so. At the end of the period covered by the report, the Council delegation visited the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, both the mission area in Kosovo and Metohija and Belgrade. The benefits of first-hand insight were immediately visible. This visit contributed to the improvement of dialogue between the Council and my Government, which has significantly intensified and qualitatively advanced in the past year.

The importance of frequent and constructive exchanges of views between the Council and countries directly involved in issues on its agenda has been emphasized during this debate, as well as on a number of previous occasions. In this connection, I would like to mention the note by the President of the Security Council of 25 September of this year, in which it is stated, inter alia, that "it is essential that ... the Government of the host country be fully engaged during the life of a mission" (*S/2001/905, para.3*). We fully share that view. We also think that there is a need and room for further broadening such cooperation, and we are ready to contribute to that end.

This is particularly true at this point in time, only a month before elections in Kosovo and Metohija. As is well known, the situation in this province of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia's Republic of Serbia is still very grave and much has to be done to improve it and make it possible for all voters to participate in the elections. Therefore, it is crucial that a joint effort to that end is made by the Security Council, UNMIK and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999). The eventual success of UNMIK is in the interest of both the Council and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and we should work together towards that goal.

As I already mentioned, a number of issues regarding the situation in the Balkans are on the Security Council's agenda. While each is specific in nature, they are all part of a larger picture and in that sense are interrelated and connected. In a way and to some extent, the Council recognized this reality by, for example, adopting resolution 1345 (2001) earlier this year. We in Yugoslavia are of the view that the region should begin to consider how to address in totality and comprehensively its existing problems. We also believe that in such a process the role of the Security Council is indispensable.

In conclusion, I would like to express the hope of my delegation that many constructive comments made during this debate will be translated into practical

action and will contribute to the even more efficient and effective work of the Security Council.

Mr. Aldouri (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation wishes to express its gratitude to Ambassador Ryan, the Permanent Representative of Ireland and President of the Security Council, for introducing the report of the Security Council under consideration. We also wish to thank the Secretariat for preparing this comprehensive report.

We are aware of the delicacy of the relations between the Security Council and the General Assembly but that does not prevent us from saying that the Council should have submitted an analytical report that would have enabled the Assembly to perform its duty of considering the report's form and content in conformity with the relevant articles of the Charter. We hope that we will achieve real democracy in the United Nations, particularly in the relations between these two organs, in which each organ will perform its role without fear of the role of the other organ. An objective analysis of the positive and negative aspects of the Council's work would no doubt help us better understand future relations at the international level and within the context of the United Nations system.

The Council currently acts alone and exercises control over the Organization's work; this limits the Organizations's freedom and kills the spirit of initiative that has characterized the Assembly and its various committees and subcommittees. The report under consideration was issued in accordance with Article 15 and Article 24, paragraph 3, of the Charter. In our view, those articles have not been fully respected, because the General Assembly debate on the report has so far been a formality lacking spirit and cohesion. We believe the Council should have been daring enough to tell us objectively where it succeeded in its mission and where it failed in dealing with the problems it faced during the period under review. It does not necessarily need to give us a detailed analysis for every action taken, but rather one for every subject, such as peace and security, peacekeeping operations, sanctions and others. It should tell us when the veto was employed and why, and when the threat of using the veto was employed and what the results of the threat were.

The Council has to accept democratically what the General Assembly declares. It also has to be honest in saying where it applied the Charter clearly and transparently and when it was compelled to use a double-standard, failing to act in accordance with the Charter.

We believe that the question of sanctions on Iraq, for example, has not been dealt with in this report, aside from references to relevant documents. That gives a very clear picture of the way the Council deals with this grave and delicate matter: without concern for its devastating implications on the preservation of international peace and security, in addition to the resulting negative humanitarian consequences.

The deliberations of the Council and its subcommittees are held in closed meetings, even though they affect the fate and life of a population of approximately 25 million. These deliberations result in decisions and resolutions devoid of any humanitarian spirit. They have, in fact, contributed to killing more than 1.5 million Iraqis — mothers, children and the elderly — by the continuation of a complete embargo without precedent in the history of humanity. The closed and bureaucratic meetings held in closed rooms are very often totally detached from the plight and suffering that result from the Council's decisions and resolutions. But this has been the nature of the Security Council, not only this past year but during the last decade.

The closed meetings simply mean that the countries concerned do not participate in these deliberations, which means that the Council talks to itself and makes decisions that are far from being transparent.

This is the democracy that the powerful party in the Council wants. We Members of the Assembly have to get used to it and live with it. The meetings of the Sanctions Committee of the Security Council relating to Iraq — let alone the meetings of the Council itself — are closed meetings, even though they debate and consider issues relating to medicine, food, civilian and humanitarian needs. The representative of Iraq has to wait in front of room 6 or room 5 for the meeting of the Council to end, and, after that, for the appearance of some Council members, who may be kind enough to give him some information about some of the points discussed in the meeting. Did they decide to give medicine to the children? Did they decide to give food to the children? Did they decide to allow some spare parts for electric grids? What constructive role does the Security Council play in these closed meetings, while depriving the countries concerned of the chance to

express their views and provide information that might correct much of the bureaucracy's information in the reports prepared by personnel who work for the Organization.

The confidentiality of these meetings makes the Security Council vulnerable to accusations of subjectivity, of a lack of transparency and of applying double standards. This is the real situation. We are awaiting reform of the Security Council in response to the wishes of the Members of the United Nations. The sanctions that are mentioned as procedures in the Charter were never meant to be permanently imposed on States and people. They are temporary measures. But the behaviour and conduct of the Council, especially of some influential countries, demonstrates how those countries want to impose sanctions that are permanent in nature, contrary to the provisions of the Charter, and do not take into consideration the provisions of the Security Council resolutions with which Iraq has already complied.

The indifference of the Council and the sanctions Committee towards the suffering and plight of the people of Iraq is glaring and shameful. How can one member of the Council suspend contracts worth more than $4 billion? How can we be denied products and goods that could contribute to economic reconstruction and to the destroyed social fabric of Iraq, and which would bolster the international community's efforts to alleviate the grave hardships of daily life in Iraq in the areas of agriculture, industry, electricity, water, health care and so on?

The maintenance of international peace and security, for which the Council is responsible, has not been accorded the attention its requires in conformity with the provisions of the Charter and the principles of international law. Indeed, we can say that the Council has failed to find just solutions to certain problems directly related to international peace and security. In this respect, I would refer specifically to the question of Palestine.

One member of the Council has made the issue of Palestine impossible to solve, even in its human dimension. The people of Palestine are subject to murder, displacement, destruction and direct colonization by a brutal force supported by a super-Power. Is it not the Security Council's responsibility to protect these people, who are struggling for their liberation and usurped rights? If the Council cannot even provide humanitarian protection, how can the international community trust it to find a political solution to the Palestinian question, in accordance with the principles of international law and the United Nations Charter?

The same applies to Afghanistan. The unarmed and destitute people of that country are being subject to military aggression that is merely destroying the ruins left behind by previous aggressions. There is nothing left to destroy, but civilians are being killed and displaced while the Security Council refuses to debate the issue. The Council, as the United Nations organ directly responsible for international peace and security, is supposed to hold public debates on such issues or at least, if it cannot address their political and military dimensions, on their humanitarian aspect. Does this issue have no bearing on international peace and security? Have the Charter and international law not been violated?

We believe that the legitimate right of self-defence cannot be invoked arbitrarily and absolutely. It is a right prescribed by international law; if it is not so exercised, it constitutes aggression. The people of Afghanistan look to this Organization for justice and a peaceful solution to their problems, and not through missiles, aircraft, bombs and the intimidation of civilians.

In all honesty, the work of the Security Council needs substantive, in-depth and frank discussion divorced from selfishness and self-interest. Recent developments in the world have, regrettably, led to one Power's having taken control of and directing the Council, dictating its whims in its own interests. The resolutions adopted recently merely highlight that fact. These developments have negatively affected the work of the Council and will continue to do so, in direct contravention of the Charter. This emerging trend raises difficult and serious questions about the Council's credibility.

Finally, I wish to congratulate the newly elected members of the Council: Bulgaria, Cameroon, Guinea, Mexico and the Syrian Arab Republic. We hope that they will contribute to restoring balance in the Council and to reforming it to serve the ambitions and hopes of the international community to achieve peace and security, in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter and free from duplicity, non-transparency and the narrow interests of certain States.

Mr. Sharma (Nepal): Let me begin by congratulating Bulgaria, Cameroon, Guinea, Mexico and the Syrian Arab Republic on their election as non-permanent members of the Security Council for the next two years.

I thank Ambassador Richard Ryan of Ireland, President of the Security Council for the month of October, for the introductory statement he made the other day, presenting the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly.

I also congratulate Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the United Nations for the world's most prestigious honour, the Nobel Peace Prize, that they have been jointly awarded this year. It is an honour that the Secretary-General has said he accepted with humility. This should remind us that our Organization, like any other human enterprise, is imperfect and needs reforms to address the challenges before it.

Articles 15 and 24 of the United Nations Charter require the Security Council to submit its annual and, when necessary, special reports to the General Assembly for its consideration. Paragraph 1 of Article 15 clearly stipulates that these reports

> "shall include an account of the measures that the Security Council has decided upon or taken to maintain international peace and security".

Additionally, the General Assembly, in its resolution 51/193, has called upon the Council to include in its reports, among other things, information on its consultations of the whole, on the role of General Assembly resolutions in its decision-making and on steps taken to improve its working methods.

The Security Council works on behalf of the general membership in matters of international peace and security. It is therefore the obligation of the Council to become transparent, responsive and accountable in its working methods, which it can do by bringing its deliberations out from the shadow of secrecy and by promoting a participatory decision-making process as far as is practicable.

And its report should reflect that obligation as well. But, once again, the General Assembly is perplexed by a thick compendium of formal documents, resolutions and statements devoid of analysis, which the Council has presented as its annual report. While its sheer volume helps us appreciate the range and complexity involved in the staggering workload of the Council, it is no more than annexes without a report, a body without a soul.

In fact, the grandiose flavour often manifest in the Council's work is hardly compatible with the general health and requirements of our Organization, and it may well have contributed to compromising the effectiveness of its other functions in many ways. The Council's ritualized public debates are a case in point.

We appreciate public debates with a purpose, but they can in no way substitute either for substantive consultations or for the imperative of cooperation. Neither should they be a means to camouflage the Council's less than democratic decision-making process. What is more, to our concern, these debates have proved to be a way for the Council to widen its scope and encroach on the mandates of other main organs of the United Nations.

The Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi clearly pointed to the ambiguous and unrealistic mandates that were responsible for the failure of a number of United Nations missions. Given the working style of the Council still in practice, it may not be surprising if we repeat the mistakes of the past.

We welcome the consultations — of a sort — with troop-contributing countries, which the Council has started on a more or less regular basis. But we need to move beyond, from mere consultations without much substance to sustained cooperation in all relevant aspects among troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat to promote understanding, to bring about synergy and to improve coordination, which are so critical to ensuring a mission's success. In that context, there is an unmistakably urgent need to involve troop contributors in all phases of a mission.

While the idea of using Security Council missions may prove useful to improve the Council's response to a crisis, dispatching full Council-sized missions is extravagant at best. The world is watching us, and self-discipline is a great personal and organizational virtue and an important element of success.

In the Millennium Declaration last autumn, our heads of State or Government unequivocally reaffirmed the need to maintain peace and security effectively and resolved to give the United Nations the resources and tools it needs to do its tasks. We believe that, while

additional mandates must be accompanied by commensurate resources, wise spending by each United Nations organ, including the Security Council, is only reasonable. The time has come to ponder this seriously.

Equally important is the question of reforming the structure of the Council. In an organization founded on the bedrock of the values we cherish and the principles and purposes we share — such as the United Nations — there should be no "us" and no "them", but just "us" and only us. But unfortunately, in an otherwise democratic United Nations and in a democratizing world, the Council's structure remains an anachronistic remnant of a bygone era, where roles are predestined and prerogatives are preordained. It is in keeping neither with our times nor with anyone's interests.

During this debate over the past two days, we have heard many revealing insights regarding the scope of reforms needed in both the structure and the working methods of the Security Council, including from sitting members of the Council. We are happy that the President of the Council has indicated that the process of at least improving the report will soon be set in motion.

I hope that happens soon, and that other reforms, both in working methods and in structure, will be pursued with a sense of the utmost urgency and shared responsibility.

Mr. Semakula Kiwanuka (Uganda): Permit me at the very outset to thank Mr. Richard Ryan, the representative of Ireland and President of the Security Council for this month, for his introduction of the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session for the reporting period 2000-2001. I also take this opportunity to congratulate the Republics of Bulgaria, Cameroon, Guinea and Mexico and the Syrian Arab Republic on their election to the Security Council.

We congratulate the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and the United Nations as a whole on the award of the Nobel Peace Prize. The award is in recognition of the distinguished leadership of the Secretary-General and the United Nations, including the Security Council, in their tireless efforts to achieve international peace and security and to make the world a better place to live in.

This debate is taking place at a critical time after the appalling, tragic and despicable acts of terrorism perpetrated by the men of darkness on 11 September here in New York, in Washington, D.C., and in Pennsylvania. The role and the leadership of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security are in greater demand today than ever before.

Let me take the Assembly back in history. As far back as 1934 the League of Nations adopted a resolution that referred to the establishment of an international criminal court for the suppression of terrorism, and the 1937 Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of Terrorism was signed by 23 countries. However, the Convention was ratified by only one country and never came into force. That was before the foundation of the United Nations.

Today the situation is different. In the face of increasing acts of terrorism, the Security Council has demonstrated its uncompromising determination to fight this scourge. In its resolution 1269 (1999) of 19 October 1999, the Council called upon all States to implement fully the international anti-terrorism conventions to which they were parties. More gratifying was the recently adopted resolution 1373 (2001) of 28 September, which came in the wake of the tragedies that occurred on 11 September. The resolution was comprehensive, and it acknowledged the right of self-defence against barbaric acts such as those of 11 September 2001.

As a country which has suffered from repeated acts of terrorism, Uganda gives its full support to that resolution and reiterates its determination to work together not only to protect our people from terrorist attacks, but also to combat any international network that supports terrorism. Uganda invites all States to prevent and suppress in their territories the financing of terrorist actions. Perpetrators of terrorist acts must be brought to justice, and no safe haven should be given to terrorists anywhere.

Uganda will intensify the exchange of information necessary to prevent and suppress terrorist acts, as well as the exchange of experience in the field of counter-terrorism. We therefore welcome the measures taken so far to block terrorist organizations' access to financing, and we shall continue our strong efforts to restrict the ability of terrorists to raise and transfer funds for their criminal activities.

The escalation of conflict in various parts of the world has affected and continues to affect adversely the work of the United Nations. During the past decade, millions have been killed. They were not just victims caught in a crossfire, they themselves became targets. The statistics are daunting: over a million people have been killed, and over 30 million have been displaced. Countless men and women are denied access to food and medicine. It is imperative, therefore, that the security of United Nations personnel serving in difficult and hazardous field conditions around the world be substantially improved. It is an obligation of all Member States to demonstrate in practice their commitment to protect those international civil servants who are performing their duties in such risky conditions.

In its resolutions 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999 and 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000, the Security Council strongly condemned not only the deliberate targeting of civilians but also the barbaric attacks on others protected under international law. These and many other acts of terrorism highlight the importance of having appropriate mechanisms — the United Nations or other dispute settlement mechanisms — to prevent and to resolve conflicts. We recommend an intensification of adequate measures for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants. In this regard, we further commend the Council for paying special attention to the demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers.

The Security Council has recognized the important role regional bodies can play in securing international peace and security, and we welcome the Council's willingness to work with such organizations. Accordingly, we commend the Council for its strong support of the Eighth Arusha Regional Summit, on 1 December 1999, which designated former President Nelson Mandela the Facilitator of the Arusha peace process.

With regard to peacekeeping, this is a core responsibility of the United Nations and of the Security Council in particular. Over the years, some 750,000 men and women have served in United Nations peacekeeping operations. At least 1,500 have made the ultimate sacrifice and lost their lives in the service of humankind. Africa, however, notes with concern and regret the ever-increasing reluctance of the Security Council to commit sufficient peacekeeping troops where they are badly needed, such as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We urge the Council to reverse this trend. Uganda appeals to the Security Council to assist the ongoing peace processes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in Burundi, in Sierra Leone and elsewhere with far greater commitment than before.

Last year the Secretary-General appointed a Panel of Experts chaired by Ms. Ba-N'Daw to investigate the alleged exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The report of that Panel was found wanting by the Security Council because of its unsubstantiated allegations. For this reason, the life of the Panel was extended under another Chairmanship, that of Ambassador Kassem. As we await the findings of Ambassador Kassem's panel, it is totally imprudent to make wild accusations and condemnations, as is becoming customary on the part of some delegations from the region.

Let me now turn to the reform of the Security Council. We note with satisfaction the improvement in the Council's working methods. There is more transparency, and the Arria formula is being used more and more. Nevertheless, the question of equitable representation remains unresolved. There is no need to emphasize that today, more than ever before, the Security Council needs the rest of the world to join in a spirit of cooperation and interdependence. To help speed up the enlargement process, Uganda would support a step-by-step expansion to 21 seats. This would be in line with those who argue, though unconvincingly, that too large a Council would be unmanageable.

There is no doubt that the Security Council carries the unmistakable imprint of its foundation. The maintenance of international peace and security remains its strongest and most distinctive attribute in the post-cold-war era. As we assess the work of the Security Council, and its responsibility and role in the maintenance of international peace and security, Uganda commends the deliberate expansion of the concept of human security. Today the competencies of the Council include not only the fight against terrorism, but also the fight against HIV/AIDS and other killer diseases, as well as the persistent scourge of poverty.

Ms. Jarbussynova (Kazakhstan): At the outset, my delegation would like to thank the current President of the Security Council, Ambassador Richard Ryan of Ireland, for introducing the annual report of the

Security Council. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the newly elected members of the Security Council and to wish them every success in their future endeavours.

Last Friday the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the United Nations and to the Secretary-General for their tireless efforts to achieve international peace and stability. This is a well-deserved honour for the Member States and for the staff of the United Nations Secretariat. We are greatly encouraged by this great distinction, and we will continue to provide all possible support to the Organization and to the Secretary-General.

The Security Council has always been at the forefront of efforts to maintain international peace and security. During the year under review, the Council held 173 formal meetings and 185 consultations of the whole, adopted 52 resolutions and issued 35 presidential statements. It encompassed a wide range of issues concerning the participation of women in conflict resolution and peace processes, the impact of armed conflict on children, the safety of civilians in armed conflict, and HIV/AIDS.

My delegation welcomes the efforts of the Security Council to enhance its openness and transparency by conducting open meetings with the participation of non-Council members. We support the Council's intention to hold, whenever possible, public briefings by the Secretariat and representatives of the Secretary-General. We think that the Council's debates will be more effective if it continues to conduct interactive discussions between the Council and non-Council members.

In this regard, my delegation commends the representatives of the Security Council for their participation in the meeting of the Working Group on Council reform, during which they were able to share their views on the working methods of the Council. This was a remarkable event for all members of the Working Group.

During the reporting period, the Security Council paid special attention to the situation in Afghanistan. The Council conducted numerous meetings and informal consultations of the whole, and adopted resolution 1333 (2000). The current situation in Afghanistan remains complex. It has deteriorated as a result of the military actions being taken against terrorist bases in Afghanistan, which jeopardize the lives of innocent people. We believe that a special meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Afghanistan could facilitate the political process and help move towards the goals of national reconciliation and a lasting political settlement.

The international community, under the auspices of the United Nations, should address the Afghan problem comprehensively and thoroughly until it is solved once and for all. This process, aimed at restoring peace in Afghanistan and at assisting its people in the formation of a multi-ethnic, fully representative government, should be carried out under the strict and continuing supervision of the Security Council. As we have witnessed, isolated measures, arms embargoes and sporadic efforts to combat the drug trade have failed to produce any long-term effect in Afghanistan.

The tragic events of 11 September have forced the international community to consider the issue of international terrorism as one of its priorities. My delegation concurs with the view that, in a new era, the Security Council will be playing an even more important role in elaborating a global strategy against international terrorism. Recent Security Council resolutions impose far-reaching measures to eliminate international terrorism. The establishment by the Council of a counter-terrorism committee is the first important step towards the successful implementation of these highly important resolutions. My country will fully cooperate with the Committee.

Recent events have clearly indicated the need to strengthen the synergy between the United Nations and the Security Council. The Council also needs the full cooperation of all of the principal bodies of the United Nations. Every effort should be made to expand the area of interaction of these United Nations organs and to promote the role of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretary-General, who, in accordance with the United Nations Charter, is to bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security. We expect the Council to implement its initiative to organize an institutional dialogue between that body and the Economic and Social Council.

In conclusion, my delegation would also like to make a few comments concerning the report of the Security Council. We note that despite its huge volume

of 571 pages, the report is mainly a compilation of numerous documents that do not have an analytical component. The report, which covers the period from 16 June 2000 to 15 June 2001, describes the activities of the Security Council during that period only. Perhaps that is why this discussion today has not attracted much attention from delegations. In this respect, my delegation agrees with the proposal formulated by certain delegations to request the Secretariat to prepare an analytical and informative report of the Security Council in order to make our future discussions more fruitful and meaningful.

We look forward to working closely with the Security Council and to participating actively in all of its efforts to promote the global quest for peace.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): It might seem unnecessarily redundant for us to add our voice to those of the many delegations that have participated in the debate and referred to the serious shortcomings in the report on the work of the Security Council that has been submitted to us. However, we are doing so, first, because of our deep interest in strengthening the United Nations, and, secondly, in order to rise to the challenge posed to us yesterday by the Permanent Representative of Singapore, Kishore Mahbubani, who encouraged the largest possible number of delegations to offer their views on the format and the contents of the report that is the subject of our deliberations today.

In this respect, we fully agree with what has been stated repeatedly by others: that the report does not even minimally meet our expectations. It is extremely descriptive, excessively lengthy and totally devoid of those elements that would allow States Members of the Organization that do not have the privilege of belonging to the Security Council to assess the work of that organ. In other words — as has also been reiterated yesterday and today — the report does not comply satisfactorily with the provisions of Article 15 of the Charter. We also agree with Ambassador Mahbubani and with many of the colleagues who spoke before me that this does not necessarily have to be the case. A shorter, more analytical report would be much more appreciated, one akin to the annual report on the work of the Organization that we are accustomed to receiving from the Secretary-General. Just a few days ago, we had a constructive debate on the most recent report, which covers the fifty-fifth session.

This is not the time to go into detail. Suffice it to say that almost any reasonable format chosen would be preferable to the format of this year's report, and surely much more economical.

As to my first remark, regarding our interest in strengthening the United Nations, I would like briefly to refer to the implications of the report for our system of governance. It is no secret to anyone that, as the Security Council has grown in importance, the impact of the General Assembly has waned. The events of last month underline this fact eloquently. While the Security Council acted, through the adoption of its resolution 1373 (2001), which contains obligations binding upon us all, the General Assembly deliberated for a week without adopting any decision at all.

Mr. Sharma (Nepal), Vice-President, took the Chair.

This occurred despite the fact that last year, in the Millennium Declaration, our heads of State decided:

> "To reaffirm the central position of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations". (*resolution 55/2, para. 30*)

But our main point is not to join in the lamentations over the General Assembly's loss of a leading role. We believe that strengthening one organ does not necessarily have to be at the expense of the other. In other words, this is not a zero-sum game. Putting an end to the present situation undoubtedly requires, inter alia, reform of both the Security Council and the General Assembly itself, and also of the Economic and Social Council.

But while agreements are being reached on such delicate matters, we can at least strengthen the few links that already exist between these organs. Among the links between the Security Council and the General Assembly, the most visible are the increasingly frequent, though still insufficient, open meetings of the Security Council, despite their shortcomings, which Ambassador Kamalesh Sharma of India recalled yesterday. The annual report falls into the same category, at least hypothetically. That is why our disappointment with this year's report is not limited to its lack of analysis; we are disappointed because of yet another missed opportunity to make our main organs work better and in a coordinated manner. Moreover, the report contributes to the image of a forum that lacks

transparency, but has power, vis-à-vis another forum that acts with greater transparency, but has little capacity to influence the decision-making process.

Therefore, this is no trivial matter, and that is why we have ventured to intervene at this late stage to add our voice to the demand that such a sterile exercise not be repeated. If we truly want to strengthen the United Nations, we must find a way to make all the intergovernmental forums function, each in its own sphere of competence, coherently or at least in a coordinated manner.

Mr. Al-Malki (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): Like my colleague, the Ambassador of Uganda, I extend my thanks and appreciation to Ambassador Richard Ryan, the President of the Security Council for this month, for his presentation of the report of the Council to the General Assembly.

I join my colleague, the Ambassador of Guatemala, in responding to the call by the Ambassador of Singapore for delegations to make their opinions and viewpoints known on the report of the Security Council, since my delegation was honoured and privileged to be a member of the Council from 1998 to 1999.

The discussion of this item is particularly important because, as one of the main organs of the United Nations — along with the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and others — the Security Council is entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security, as is clear from its title, in accordance with the Charter. The task entrusted to the Council gives it and its members serious responsibilities that they must bear and carry out on behalf of the general membership of the United Nations.

Despite the important role that the Council plays in the maintenance of international peace and security, its current work has not been at the desired level. The Council continues to be handicapped when it comes to many of the issues on its agenda.

In Africa, bitter wars continue to kill innocent civilians in Rwanda, Angola, Congo, Sierra Leone and other countries. While the Council's response and effectiveness were not adequate for the magnitude of these events, the same is true of the conflict in the Middle East, where the Council has failed to implement the resolutions that it itself adopted and that, if implemented, would have put an end to the killing and the confiscation by Israelis of Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967. The failure of the Council to find a permanent solution to this question is proof of the paralysis and inactivity of this main organ of the United Nations.

The main reason for this failure is the absence of real political will on the part of some of its members and the fact that they impede the work of the Council. This impediment goes so far as the exercise of the power of the veto. This paralysis has an adverse impact on the maintenance of international peace and security.

On the other hand, the Security Council has frequently, and to a great extent, resorted to sanctions since 1990. During the last 11 years, it has been clear that this instrument is in dire need of periodic review in order to avoid the negative and adverse impact of sanctions regimes on innocent civilians, particularly the elderly, children and women. We believe that the Council should conduct an in-depth and comprehensive study of sanctions regimes, in cooperation with other United Nations bodies and the Organization's relevant specialized agencies. The Council should take rapid and effective measures towards adopting a more valid regime that will have no adverse impact on innocent civilians.

Due to the fact that the role of the Security Council is acquiring increasing importance — particularly since the end of the cold war — and given the successive changes in international politics, the emergence of new issues and the increase in the membership of the United Nations from 50 States, in 1945, to 189 States in 2001, there is a need to carry out a comprehensive reform of the Council — in its size and working methods. Such changes should make the Council more balanced, representative, transparent and effective. We will discuss this issue in detail during the debate on the relevant item to discuss the report of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform, which was established by the President of the General Assembly.

In closing, I would like to say that the minor changes the Security Council has made in its working methods during recent years to bring about more transparency — particularly for Member States that are not members of the Council — are not up to our expectations of changes that would have a substantial and positive effect on the results of the Council's work.

We therefore hope that the Council will redouble its efforts and consider making radical changes in its working methods so that it is no longer fossilized and can no longer be described as a private country club open only to its permanent members.

Finally, my delegation would like future reports of the Security Council to the General Assembly to be more analytical and to contain creative proposals and ideas on which delegations could present their views and carry out a discussion.

Mr. Effah-Apenteng (Ghana): At the outset, allow me to express my appreciation to Ambassador Richard Ryan, Permanent Representative of Ireland and current President of the Security Council, for his lucid introduction of the annual report of the Security Council covering the period from 16 June 2000 to 15 June 2001. Taken as a whole, the statistics detailed in the report convey a picture of the busy schedule that the Council followed during the period under review.

My delegation appreciates the Council's focus on peacekeeping and its comprehensive approach to dealing with the maintenance of international peace and security, for which it has the primary responsibility. We are particularly encouraged by the fact that the Council paid particular attention to conflict prevention, resolution and management, especially in Africa. We would like to urge the Council to continue to focus its attention on these issues, given the gravity, complexity and multifaceted nature of the problems and conflicts bedevilling the continent and the need for peace and security, which are prerequisites for promoting development and stability.

Within this context, we welcome the consultations that the Council has of late initiated with regional institutions, and we would like to encourage the Council to stay on course. We are of the firm conviction that partnership with subregional and regional organizations like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) could go a long way in helping to find lasting solutions to the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa.

We have also noted that during the year under review the Council undertook missions to some of the conflict areas. We think this is a useful approach to the Council's work, since such visits would enable the Council to make informed decisions. In this vein, the examination of the general situations in West Africa in the light of the report of the visit there by the United Nations Inter-Agency Mission, for example, was a step in the right direction.

I further wish to emphasize that my delegation considers the interactive consultative process between the Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing Member States an integral part of the Council's decision-making process that allows for objectivity and transparency. Although the report makes reference to briefings given by the Secretariat, it does not contain any detailed references to this consultative process, which, in our view, should have been included in the report. Even if this is a new process, we would have appreciated an assessment of how useful it has been.

We would like to stress, however, that consultations with regional and subregional players need not be held on the eve of the expiry or consideration of the mandate of peacekeeping operations in the areas concerned, but rather earlier, if the concerns of the regional players are really to be taken into account in the decisions of the Council.

My delegation has other misgivings about the format, structure and content of the report of the Security Council. The Council's current report, like preceding ones, is a mere compilation of the numerous decisions and communications addressed to the Security Council and of the decisions adopted by it — information already in the public domain. One looks in vain in the report for any analysis of the factors that influenced the decisions of the Council in its deliberations. There is no mention of the failures of the Council and the prospects for the ensuing year. Our assessment of the Council's work can be meaningful, balanced and objective only if the reports submitted by it to the General Assembly are comprehensive and analytical and provide Member States with a clear picture of how the Council is able to discharge, or is not able to discharge, its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

We are convinced that under Article 24 the Security Council is accountable to the General Assembly, and it is only when the Council's reports are prepared along the lines requested annually by Member States that the General Assembly, as the United Nations organ with universal membership, can exercise its oversight functions. If the Security Council continues to adopt resolutions as edicts that all Member

States are expected to implement scrupulously — such as resolution 1373 (2001) — then it is only fitting and proper that it should explain its actions fully to the general membership in order to attain the latter's support, understanding and cooperation — indispensable ingredients in a genuine search for international peace, security and development.

As we all know, the report is submitted to the General Assembly by the Security Council in accordance with Article 24, paragraph 3, and Article 15, paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations. Our understanding of the spirit and the letter behind those Articles of the Charter is that through its report the Security Council is, in effect, rendering an account of its stewardship to the general membership of the United Nations through the General Assembly. In the light of the creeping jurisdiction of the Security Council into areas that lie outside its mandate — which is a matter of concern — we would like to underscore the imperative need to build trust and confidence between the Security Council and the General Assembly, as well as between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, since such a relationship is pertinent to the Council's effective discharge of its Charter obligations.

Efforts to this end would enhance the solemn undertaking given by our heads of State or Government at the Millennium Summit just last year to strengthen the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. We recognize that such collaboration is not only absolutely necessary, but would also prove beneficial to both organs.

We remain convinced that some of the problems currently encountered by the general membership in its dealings with the Security Council would best be solved through more openness, transparency and consultation between members and non-members of the Council. A viable and realistic option would be to ensure the rapid expansion of and better representation on the Council. It is our fervent hope that this will be speedily done after years of discussion.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Bulgaria, Cameroon, Guinea, Mexico and the Syrian Arab Republic on their election to the Security Council. I trust that the new members will work in concert with the other members to resolve the growing demand by the majority of States Members of the United Nations for equitable representation on and transparency in the Council.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of the report of the Security Council, as contained in document A/56/2?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: We have concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 11.

I thank all representatives for their full cooperation, and I hope that this cooperation will continue in future meetings.

Programme of work

The Acting President: I should like to inform members of the following addition and change to the programme of work of the General Assembly. On Wednesday, 21 November 2001, in the morning, the General Assembly will take up, as the second item, agenda item 36, "Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic".

Agenda item 17 (g), "Appointment of members of the Joint Inspection Unit", originally scheduled for Thursday, 1 November 2001, will be taken up on Monday, 10 December, in the morning.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.